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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 OTTAWA 001234

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/A - H. ENSHER AND N. SINGH, EUR/PRM - R.
CARLAND, AND SCA/FO - N. KROMASH

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [EAID](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: U.S. AND CANADA DISCUSS AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

REF: A. OTTAWA 790 (CANADA FURTHER INCREASES AFGHANISTAN
AID)

[1](#)B. OTTAWA 1122 (CANADA SEEKS U.S. SUPPORT FOR
BORDER ACTION PLAN)

[1](#)C. OTTAWA 1152 (CANADA SEEKS U.S. HELP TO PRESS ISI)

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Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: An inter-agency USG delegation met recently in Ottawa with Canadian counterparts to discuss civilian and military cooperation in South Afghanistan. Canadian interlocutors described the strategic coordination and outreach efforts embodied in their Kandahar Action Plan. Canada seeks to engage Afghan citizens by delivering on promises made by the international community and the Government of Afghanistan (GOA), working directly and indirectly to build the GOA capacity to lead. Canada is hampered in this effort by security threats that reduce the number of partners who are willing to operate in the area. Taliban insurgents are fighting harder and smarter with increasingly sophisticated command and control, according to Canadian analysts. End summary.

Kandahar Action Plan

[1](#)2. (C) The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's (DFAIT) Afghan Task Force Director Richard Arbeiter began the day of meetings on September 4 with USG Afghan and Pakistan experts from State, Defense, and USAID (delegation lists in paras 20 and 21) by giving a broad overview of Canada's mission and political objectives in Afghanistan. He said Canadian participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is based on a "whole of government approach" that assures close cooperation with the U.S. and responds to local Afghan concerns. Canada has drafted a "Kandahar Action Plan" (KAP) that reflects its strategic priorities. He described the KAP as a "transformational agenda through strategic engagement" with the Government of Afghanistan, based on two years, worth of conversations with local Afghan leaders and citizens. It provides an integrated civilian-military approach and

reflects high level guidance from Afghan and Canadian government senior officials. The Canadians envision the KAP as a means to deliver a more secure Kandahar that is better governed and able to deliver basic services to Kandaharis, said Arbeiter. They seek to reinforce the Afghan national government so it can secure the country's borders and sustain for the long-term the stability and reconstruction efforts.

13. (C) The plan identifies five priority subject areas:

- ANSF capacity building;
- basic service delivery (water resources, jobs, and education);
- election support;
- Afghan-Pakistan border dialogue; and,
- support for Afghan-led reconciliation efforts.

The KAP also identifies six geographic districts for special emphasis:

- Kandahar City;
- Arghandab;
- Zarhey;
- Panjwai;
- Dand; and,
- Spin Boldak.

14. (C) In the area of governance, Arbeiter said Canada seeks to create the environment that will allow provincial- and district-level Kandahar institutions to deliver basic services to their citizens. As law and order improves, Canada will concurrently seek to help those same institutions plan, fund, manage, and monitor increasingly sophisticated

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delivery of basic services. Canada believes that sub-national governance capacity is the key to the national government's legitimacy in Kandahar, which is why insurgents place a priority on targeting local leadership. The perception among local people of limited progress has eroded public trust in the government and the ISAF counter-insurgency mission, said Arbeiter.

Governance Strategic Engagement

15. (C) Canada has a series of objectives for its strategy to improve governance in Kandahar, according to Arbeiter. Canadian officials are in dialogue with IDLG and UNAMA to clarify coordination arrangements for sub-national governance in Kandahar. They are doing sustained outreach to provincial and district leaders in their designated key districts. They are increasing the presence of political officers and aid workers in key districts. They are seeking to forge stronger links between provincial line ministries and district governments. Specific tasks in furtherance of these objectives include:

- work with IDLG and UNDP to establish a secretariat in the office of the Governor of Kandahar;
- cooperate with USAID to increase governance capacity at the Kandahar municipal level;
- promote a secure and viable voter registration and electoral system; and,
- support a tribal and conflict mapping exercise.

Reconstruction and Development

16. (C) Arbeiter described the goal for reconstruction and development success in Kandahar as ensuring that local citizens can "touch, taste, and feel" development by the GOA. Canada seeks to engage with citizens by delivering on promises made by the international community and the GOA and working directly and indirectly to build the GOA capacity to

lead. Canada is hampered in this effort by security threats that reduce the number of NGO partners who are willing to operate in the area. These threats also limit the mobility of aid workers to execute these programs and hinder beneficiaries, particularly women, from enjoying the fruits of these efforts, said Arbeiter. Canada has chosen to address these challenges by focusing on a few crucial programming areas, delivering humanitarian assistance as a priority, and increasing the number of civilian staff to advance the process. Specific objectives in the support of reconstruction and development include:

- work with departments and line ministries to increase their capacity to deliver basic services;
- support education activities;
- support catalytic investments in local infrastructure in the identified key districts;
- deliver humanitarian assistance; and,
- increase capacity and access to health services.

17. (C) Arbeiter indicated that the Canadian government on September 5 would identify 21 benchmarks to measure progress on the six priority areas and three signature projects it has on the six priority areas and three signature projects it will implement in Afghanistan between 2008 and 2011 (ref a). The Canadian government also released a number of progress indicators it will use to assess specific steps it has achieved towards meeting the benchmarks. The government plans to issue quarterly reports on progress toward the benchmarks, and will use the reports to determine if and when it should adjust its approaches.

18. (C) Elissa Goldberg, Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK), joined the discussion of the KAP via teleconference from Kandahar. She commented that U.S. and Canadian military and civilian elements have enjoyed deep and sustained

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cooperation on the ground. The KAP is the product of that intense cooperation, she said, and, at its most basic level, is meant to solidify ISAF tactical gains through measurable program in the priority areas, like job creation, education, and provision of basic services. She noted that civilian police are starting to have a "real and positive impact" in cities in the south, and the challenge will be to solidify those gains. She said the international community, especially the UK, bring different approaches to civilian policing. Goldberg asked for U.S. support in this area for Canada's concept for civilian policing in the south.

19. (C) Goldberg opined that the key challenge is to make the government in Kandahar function effectively. She was categorical in saying that the counter-insurgency will not succeed in the south unless the government can demonstrate that it can deliver core services. She praised the new governor of Kandahar as organized and committed to governance reform, citing that he had taken the elementary but important step of instituting business hours for government offices. Goldberg also highlighted the importance of road-building in the reconstruction and development agenda, and asked for continued close cooperation with USAID.

10. (C) Goldberg added that the KAP envisions counter-narcotics as focused on alternative livelihood projects, rather than interdiction and suppression programs. The new governor has no interest in eradication and is not ready to open talks about government-led eradication efforts, said Goldberg. She noted that he often speaks of the complex politics of counter-narcotics and the need to tread carefully, since cultivation cuts across tribal lines. She criticized UNAMA as not being structured to deliver success. She noted that UNAMA has only seven civilians in the south, who are smart and dedicated but spread too thin to be effective, and are also burdened with a "weak leader who means well" but is not up to the job. Arbeiter and Goldberg concluded by emphasizing that Afghans in this part of the

country are savvy and tough political operators, who know how to manipulate foreigners for their own parochial or tribal benefit. They urged that Canada and the U.S. must avoid being divided and conquered by individual tribes and political actors in the south.

Security situation

¶11. (C) Canadian interlocutors briefed the U.S. delegation on their just completed quarterly security assessment. The insurgents are emphasizing spectacular attacks, such as the June attack on Sarpoza prison, and soft targets, such as the civilian food convoys on Highway 1. Insurgents are fighting harder and smarter with increasingly sophisticated command and control. Insurgents are easily defeatable on the tactical level, said Canadian analysts. They found a growing Qtactical level, said Canadian analysts. They found a growing intensity of violence in the RC-South area. They estimated kinetic attacks and violent intimidation are up between 40 and 50 percent since the same quarter last year. They found a significant increase in IED usage by insurgents, up 40 percent. IED discoveries are also increasing at a greater rate as ISAF forces are getting more tip-offs from local residents, though Canada does not have precise data on this metric.

¶12. (C) NGOs, international organizations, and private contractors all report feeling less secure than last year, which has slowed the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. This year the Afghan National Police (ANP) has seen a drop in casualties as its performance has improved but also because the Afghan National Army (ANA) has increased its tempo of operations in the south. Consequently ANA casualties are up 80 percent this year. Canadian analysts said ISAF does not have the troop density it needs to provide security in all key districts. Average citizens are intimidated by insurgents where ISAF forces are

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not present. As a result many citizens in the south are taking a watchful attitude toward the insurgency, unwilling to support counter-insurgency, causing further delay in development program implementation. In outlying areas the Taliban are seeking to create a permanent presence but the strategic goal for them remains to retake Kandahar city.

¶13. (C) Canada assesses that much of the insurgent problem in the south requires working with Pakistan to solve border permeability issues. Arbeiter said recent tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan have caused the breakdown of bilateral talks on border issues. He said that technological solutions and infrastructure upgrades on the frontier are too costly for Canada to contemplate, which makes a political solution between the two countries the only real long-term solution.

Pakistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border

¶14. (C) Assistance: Canada provides approximately \$30 million per year in bilateral development assistance to Pakistan, and plans to increase this amount to \$50 million per year by ¶2010. By contrast, Canada currently provides \$300 million per year to Afghanistan. Canada's assistance to Pakistan focuses on education, health, and democratic governance, with an emphasis on Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions. Canada is ramping up its funding related to the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Specifically, Canada has contributed funding to the Peace Jirga process and is providing equipment and training to the Pakistani Frontier Corps. Canada believes the international community should standardize its approach to customs and border official training, and wants to improve communication with ICE and CBP. The Canadians had no immediate reaction to the idea of establishing a Friends of Pakistan donor coordination group. The Canadians were

receptive to the concept of a Frontier Trust Fund, to be administered by a Pakistani Border Czar. They will discuss the idea further and will get back to the U.S. The Canadians will also get back to the U.S. on whether Canada can respond to the UN and ICRC appeal for funds to address the humanitarian situation resulting from the Bajaur conflict.

¶15. (C) Engagement with Pakistan: Canada believes it needs to engage more frequently and at a higher level with Pakistan. According to the Canadians, this could help dispel Pakistan's belief that Canada only engages with Pakistan through an "Afghan prism." SCA/FO's Neil Kromash emphasized the U.S. would welcome increased Canadian engagement. Canada would also like to see the international community better explain its objectives in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Canadians suggested that the international community could look to "non-traditional partners" such as Saudi Arabia or China to encourage Pakistan to implement reforms, since Islamabad has encouraged Pakistan to implement reforms, since Islamabad has a "certain confidence" in their long-term commitment to engaging with Pakistan.

¶16. (C) Dubai Process: Canada is focused largely on the Dubai Process regarding Afghanistan-Pakistan relations (ref b). Canada intends the next phase of the process to be a "summitive" meeting that will result in an action plan laying out projects focused on the border and identifying areas for international assistance. Canada will present a draft action plan for the parties to review at the next meeting, which will take place at a third location -- likely Dubai. Once the parties agree to a plan, Canada will determine which projects it can help fund, and will shop around the remaining projects to its G8 partners, including the U.S. The Canadians acknowledged they could use the G8 coordinating group to facilitate implementation of the plan, but said they agreed with the U.S. view that, thus far, the coordinating group appeared to be ineffective. Canada shared its draft action plan with the U.S. delegation, asking that it keep it close-hold, as Canada has not sent it to Afghan or Pakistani officials. Canada does not plan to invite representatives

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from partner countries to the "summitive" meeting in an effort to allow the Pakistanis and Afghans to be less inhibited in their discussions, but would fully debrief the U.S. and other partners on the results of the meeting. Canada had tried to hold the meeting in both June and July 2008, but canceled it each time due to heightened tensions in the region and domestic political concerns in Pakistan. Canada is now aiming to hold it between October 10-20. It is concerned, however, about Pakistan's lack of cooperation in scheduling the meeting, and specifically about attempts by Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to set up roadblocks (ref c). Canada would appreciate U.S. assistance in urging senior Pakistani officials to continue with the Dubai Process.

Improving security

¶17. (C) Canada is focusing its attention on detention facilities and detainees, partly as a result of an Amnesty International law suit regarding detainee transfers. Canada is spending approximately \$4 million on improving the infrastructure of Sarpoza Prison and training prison staff. Canada is also working with the UK to build a National Directorate of Security facility -- Canada is contributing \$2 million to this project. In response to a question from the Canadian delegation, a U.S. official said that the U.S. will phase out community self-defense by the end of 2008, and will support community responsibility rather than the arming of community defense forces. The Canadians also inquired about needs-assessments regarding training for the Afghan Border Police. The U.S. delegation responded that the U.S. is always open to contributions from other countries, and said that one additional brigade would be particularly useful.

Assistance

¶18. (C) The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is focused on four main areas of development within Kandahar: establishing democratic governance; providing subsidized credit to SMEs; strengthening access to financial services; and, assisting with food security and agricultural recovery. The time is ripe for strengthening assistance collaboration between the U.S. and Canada, according to a CIDA official. Specifically, Canada would like to cooperate with the U.S. on election assistance. Canada hopes to be a concerted provider of election assistance, although it will obviously not be able to match U.S. levels of support. Canada plans to work with the UNDP on election assistance, but will be very hands on, according to a CIDA official, as the UNDP has a mixed record on election-related support. Canada also plans to explore options for direct bilateral support for elections in Kandahar.

Reconciliation

¶19. (C) Reconciliation is a new area of focus for Canada, and Canada would like to see Afghanistan conduct a more transparent reconciliation process, according to a DFAIT official. At a national level, Canada believes transitional justice is necessary for long-term peace and stability in Afghanistan. The international community should be working toward this now, not just after peace is achieved, said the DFAIT official. Canada is already working on some pillars of the transitional justice plan, but believes the international community should be working on all aspects of it. Canada would like further information on U.S. views regarding transitional justice. U.S. and Canadian officials will meet soon in a secure setting to discuss further details of the reconciliation process.

Participants

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¶20. (U) Canada

- Richard Arbeiter, Afghan Task Force Director, DFAIT
- Elissa Goldberg (by phone), Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK)
- Jim Nickel, Director South Asia Division, DFAIT
- Peter Fawcett, Deputy Director, South Asia Division, DFAIT
- Christopher Gibbins, Deputy Director, Afghanistan Task Force, DFAIT
- Rebecca Netley, First Secretary, Canadian Embassy, Washington, DC
- Rhett Sangster, Senior Policy Advisor, Regional and Border Issues, DFAIT
- Andrew Barnes, Policy Advisor, Pakistan, Bangladesh & Pakistan/Afghan Border Issues, DFAIT
- James Gilmour, Regional Policy Advisor, Afghanistan Task Force, DFAIT
- Cindy Kleiman, Prevention and Peacebuilding Division, DFAIT
- Michel Legault, Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Joey Cloutier, Senior Policy Advisor, Public Safety Canada
- Tolly Foerstner, Canadian Border Services Agency
- Hasit Thankey, Policy Advisor, Directorate of Afghanistan Policy, National Defence
- Nathan Taylor, Senior Program Officer, Asia Division, CIDA
- Abdullah Mojaddedi Senior Analyst, Afghanistan Task Force, CIDA
- Karolina Guay, Analyst, Kandahar Unit, CIDA

¶21. (U) USG

- Neil Kromash, Senior Advisor, Afghanistan-Pakistan Frontier, SCA/FO, State
- Henry Ensher, Director, SCA/A, State
- Nisha Singh, Desk Officer, SCA/A, State

- Raphael Carland, Desk Officer, EUR/PRM
- Robert Newberry, Director, European and NATO Policy Office, DOD
- Julia Parks Schoenfeld, Desk Officer, NATO Operations Afghanistan Office, DOD
- Caroline Brearley, Officer-in-charge, Afghanistan Desk, USAID
- LtCol. Frank Sturek, Director, Afghanistan, J5, DOD
- Ian Rainey, Desk Officer, DOD
- Kurt van der Walde, U.S. Embassy Ottawa
- Elizabeth Zentos, U.S. Embassy Ottawa

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